

The listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A fuel filter (2) having a filter housing of an internal combustion engine in which water separated from the fuel may collect inside the filter (2), in which a liquid line (3) leads from an area of the filter housing, which is exposed to fuel and where water that is separated can settle out due to gravity, to a water collecting chamber (4) situated outside the filter housing,
~~characterized by the features~~

~~— a liquid line (3) leads from an area of the filter housing, which is exposed to fuel and where water that is separated can settle out due to gravity, to a water collecting chamber (4) situated outside the filter housing,~~

wherein

- an upper area of the water collecting chamber (4) is connected by a connecting line (5) installed there to an area of the fuel delivery line (1) of the internal combustion engine, said area being downstream from the fuel filter (2).

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The fuel filter according to Claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein a delivery pump is provided in the flow path between the filter housing and the fuel delivery line (1).

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The fuel filter according to Claim 2, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the delivery pump is designed as a venturi nozzle (6) provided inside the fuel delivery line (1) through which the connecting line (5) opens into the fuel delivery line (1).

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The fuel filter according to Claim 2 ~~or 3~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the delivery performance of the delivery pump is designed for a fuel stream to be delivered continuously, wherein at least the amount of water - at least the average amount generated - which is separated within the filter during operation of the fuel filter (1) can be transported back out of the filter housing without backing up.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The fuel filter according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein a closable outflow opening is provided in a bottom area of the water collecting chamber (4).

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The fuel filter according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein a water level sensor (7) is situated in an upper area of the water collecting chamber (4).

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The fuel filter according to
~~any one of the preceding claims claim 1, characterized in that~~
wherein a water separation/retaining device is connected upstream
from the connecting line (5), leading out of the water collecting
chamber (4), in an area leading out of the water collecting
chamber (4).